

# James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area

Ten-Year Area Management Plan  
FY 2016-2025



  
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Wildlife Division Chief

15 JUNE 2016  
Date

## James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Management Plan Approval Page

### PLANNING TEAM

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### KANSAS CITY REGION

RCT Chair

  
Signature

5-12-2016  
Date

### WILDLIFE DIVISION

Wildlife Management Chief

  
Signature

5/31/16  
Date

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area, #5501
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1952
- **Acreage:** 3,084 acres
- **County:** Jackson
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Wildlife
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Wildlife, Design and Development
- **Statements of Purpose:**

### A. Strategic Direction

The primary purpose of the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area (WA) is to provide Kansas City Metropolitan residents with outdoor recreational opportunities, including fishing, hunting, dog training, field trialing, field archery, nature study, and wildlife observation while protecting water quality and providing a variety of wildlife habitats.

### B. Desired Future Condition

The desired future condition of the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area is healthy woodland, aquatic, and grassland communities that include a diversity of habitat complexes mixed with agricultural fields that are managed by best management practices with a reduced amount of invasive species across all habitats.

### C. Federal Aid Statement

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds to restore and manage wildlife, conserve and restore suitable wildlife habitat, and provide public access for hunting or other wildlife-oriented recreation.

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired with Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds to restore and manage sport fish, conserve and restore sport fish habitat (or a buffer to protect that habitat) and provide public access for sport fishing.

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

### I. Special Considerations

- A. **Priority Areas:** East Fork of Big Creek Priority Watershed
- B. **Natural Areas:** None
- C. **Other:**
  - Dove Emphasis Study Area - An adaptive resource management experiment to address uncertainties related to dove harvest management. The long-term goal is to examine relationships between regulations, habitat management, hunting opportunities, and harvest.

- Field Trial Area – Hunting dog field trials are an acceptable use of Missouri Department of Conservation (Department) areas and may be allowed if compatible with primary area resource management goals and uses. James A. Reed Memorial WA is a designated field trial area.

## **II. Important Natural Features and Resources**

- A. **Species of Conservation Concern:** None observed.
- B. **Caves:** None
- C. **Springs:** None
- D. **Other:** James A. Reed Memorial WA is in the Jackson County Prairie/Woodland Scarped Plain and Belton High Prairie Plain landtype associations within the Scarped Osage Plains Subsection. The Prairie/Woodland Scarped Plain landtype consists of broad gently rolling uplands that give way to limestone valleys with up to 200 feet of local relief. Historically, the area contained prairie-covered uplands that graded into oak savanna, and then into unique woodlands dominated by chinquapin and bur oaks in the scarped areas. Some limestone glades were present. The Belton High Prairie Plain landtype consists of high flat divides with a relief of less than 75 feet. This landtype was formerly prairie on loess over residual shale soils, but the current landscapes are nearly half cropland and half pastureland, where not urbanized on the south side of the Kansas City Metropolitan Area. (Nigh & Schroeder, 2002).

## **III. Existing Infrastructure**

### **Buildings:**

- Kansas City Regional Office: shop and storage building (built 2011), 1 parking lot (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible)
- Reed Wildlife Shop: metal building (constructed 1952), Wildlife office, shop, open storage barn, sign barn (built 1978), chemical and fuel storage building
- Horse barn (pre 1952)
- Storage building (1957)

### **Lakes:**

- Plover Lake (15.2 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), 4 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Jackrabbit Lake (31 acres): 2 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 5 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Catclaw Lake (42.2 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 5 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Cottontail Lake (26.6 acres): 2 parking lots, 6 fishing jetties

- Nell Lake (31 acres): 4 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), 4 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Gopher Lake (42 acres): 3 parking lots, rental boats, 3 fishing jetties
- Bodarc Lake (14.5 acres): 2 parking lots (1 ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), 1 fishing jetty
- Bluestem Lake (14.7 acres): parking lot, 1 fishing jetty
- Coot Lake (22.4 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), fishing dock (ADA accessible), 3 fishing jetties (1 ADA accessible)
- Tanglewood Lake (5 acres): parking lot (shared with Coot Lake)
- Honker Pond (1 acre): parking lot
- Prairie Hollow Lake (7 acres): parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), picnic pavilion with picnic tables (ADA accessible), fishing jetty and platform (ADA accessible)

**Trails:**

- Shawnee Trace Nature Trail: 2.5 miles, natural surface with 2 foot bridges
- Multi-use trails: 15 miles of horseback/bike/hike trails
- Lake fishing access trails: 15 miles of mowed access around 12 lakes

**Unmanned Archery Range:** 3 upper targets (ADA accessible), parking lot (ADA accessible), privy (ADA accessible), picnic pavilion (ADA accessible), picnic tables, 28-point field archery range

**Picnic Area and Horse Trailer Parking:** parking lot (ADA accessible), horse trailer parking lot, picnic pavilion with picnic tables, privy (ADA accessible), water hydrant

**Organized Youth Group Camping Area**

**Ponds:**

- Rearing ponds: 2 ponds at Lake Nell, 2 ponds at Coot Lake
- Unmanaged Ponds: 18 ponds

**James A. Reed Memorial Forest:** 2-acre forest planted in the memory of James A. Reed, plaque honoring Nell Reed

**Waterfowl Marsh:** 3 parking lots

**Silt Basins/Wetlands:** 14 pools

**Other Structures:**

- 7.5 miles of roads
- Automated security gate at front entrance (closed overnight)
- Pipe gates on Prairie Hollow Lake entrance and Jackson County water access easement
- 5 additional parking lots
- 2 sewage treatment facilities

#### **IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations**

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** Yes, there are restrictions related to area naming and use of the area (see deed for detailed information).
- B. Federal Interest:**
  - Uses of land acquired with Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Federal funds may also be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
  - Uses of land acquired with Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds may not interfere with the purpose for which it was acquired. Closures to sport fishing must be based on the recommendations of the state fish and wildlife agency for fish and wildlife management purposes. Federal funds may also be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- C. Easements:**
  - Waterline easement - City of Lee's Summit
  - Pipeline easement - Williams natural gas pipeline
  - Drainage easement - City of Lee's Summit
  - Access easement - Jackson County Water Department
- D. Cultural Resources Findings:** Yes, records kept with the Department Environmental Compliance Specialist. Managers should follow Best Management Practices for Cultural Resources found in the Department Resource Policy Manual.
- E. Endangered Species:** None observed.
- F. Boundary Issues:** Establishing accurate and identifiable boundary markers is a priority for this property.

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

The James A. Reed Memorial WA contains 2,799 acres of woodlands, grasslands, old fields, wetlands, agricultural fields and a small glade.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) The wildlife area contains approximately 1,059 acres of woodlands, hedgerows and tree plantings (Figure 4). Management has solely been focused on the higher quality woodland sites. In these areas, invasive species remain a challenge. The hedgerows and tree plantings are of low quality and should be considered for renovation or removal.
- 2) Invasive plant species (fescue, sericea lespedeza, autumn olive and shrub honeysuckle) are a challenge on the entire area.
- 3) Approximately 300 acres of agricultural crops (of 589 agricultural acres) are planted annually (Figure 4). Cropping supplements natural food and provides cover to attract wildlife. This creates hunting and viewing opportunities for area users. A crop rotation is used to combat invasive plants, reverse succession, provide idle areas for ground-nesting birds, produce food (such as foxtail and ragweed), and attract insects to serve as food for a variety of birds.
- 4) The area contains approximately 1,133 acres of old field, grassland, and prairie plantings. Invading woody vegetation, exotic species and erosion issues (inherited from past farming practices) are the main management challenge. Opportunities exist for enhancing native plant species diversity and creating structural diversity that provides nesting opportunities and early successional vegetation for a wide variety of species.
- 5) The wildlife area contains 28 acres of detention basins that are managed as wetlands. These pools are opportunistic wetlands and have stop log structures for water manipulation.
- 6) Manage habitat for a diversity of species, including game species.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain healthy trees and woodlands with management emphasis on providing wildlife habitat for a diversity of species and providing outdoor recreational opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor forests and woodlands for invasive exotic vegetation, diseases and insects. Suppress infestations that may develop, concentrating on areas of better habitat potential. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Retain and protect existing den trees. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Stimulate groundcover and reduce woody competition in the understory. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Retain wooded riparian corridors to promote water quality and stream health. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Strategy 5:** Monitor hedgerows and tree plantings and explore opportunities for removal or renovation. (Forestry, Wildlife)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain 6-acre limestone glade.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor glade for invasive exotic vegetation, invasive woody vegetation and diseases. Manage any infestations that may develop using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Enhance old field and prairie plantings for grassland and shrubland wildlife.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor open lands for invasive exotic vegetation and invasive woody vegetation. Manage any infestations that may develop using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Provide early succession habitat using prescribed burns, mechanical disturbance and herbicide application. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4:** Provide diverse vegetative structure and cover on agricultural lands.

**Strategy 1:** Use best management practices to reduce soil erosion. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Manage crop fields using the Department's Policy and Procedures Manual for Agricultural Land Use (a.k.a. Ag Crop program) and by utilizing permittee farming and area staff. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Suppress invasive exotic vegetation using permittee cropping (through the Ag Crop program), herbicide applications, and mechanical manipulation. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 4:** Rotate crops, plant sunflowers and wheat for dove field management and provide early successional idle fields for wildlife. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 5:** Maintain healthy wetland habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain drainages to facilitate water manipulation and control beaver and muskrat populations to improve wetland management. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Control and set back woody succession using appropriate methods. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Monitor the area for invasive exotic species. Suppress any infestations that may develop using appropriate methods. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 6:** Promote hunting and managed hunt opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct annual management activities that will provide habitat for a diversity of species. (Wildlife)

## VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations

The James A. Reed WA contains 12 fishable bodies of water totaling about 252 acres. The area also has one waterfowl marsh, 14 detention basins, and many other small ponds and fishless waterholes used by wildlife. There are 2.25 miles of permanent streams that flow through the area and several ephemeral creek channels.

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Much of the upper watershed of this area is largely developed into high-density residential lots and businesses. Land remaining undeveloped will likely be developed in the near future, increasing the potential for more run-off and erosion. A Missouri Stream Team has organized within the East Fork of Big Creek priority watershed, which includes the James A. Reed Memorial WA.
- 2) Manage aquatic vegetation to promote healthy lakes. Curly leaf pondweed, an invasive aquatic plant, is present in several area lakes. Excessive amounts of aquatic vegetation can lead to unbalanced fish populations and poor fishing. Large areas of shallow water can lead to an overabundance of aquatic vegetation and increase costs to manage our lakes.
- 3) Manage healthy fish populations. The lakes have catchable populations of largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, green sunfish, crappie, and channel catfish. Trout are stocked annually into Coot Lake, Plover Lake, and Honker Pond to provide a winter fishery and opportunity to catch a species that does not normally occur in this area.

**Management Objective 1:** Ensure quality watershed health in order to maintain water quality entering James A. Reed Memorial WA.

**Strategy 1:** Work with stakeholders, including farmers, city and county governments, homeowner associations and individual landowners to ensure watershed health. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 2:** Offer educational information to stakeholders looking for ways to protect water quality. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Use Missouri Stream Teams and other community groups to promote water quality on the wildlife area. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Protect riparian areas by leaving filter strips between streams and disturbed areas to protect water quality and habitat in streams and lakes. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2:** Create and maintain healthy fish populations and habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Use herbicide and grass carp to control unwanted aquatic vegetation in area lakes. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 2:** Use standardized sampling methods (e.g., electrofishing and trap netting) to evaluate fish populations, as needed. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Stock channel catfish, hybrid striped bass and trout to maintain populations in area lakes. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Propose fishing regulations, as needed, to sustain catchable populations of game fish species. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 5:** Add fish habitat structures, as needed, to promote fishing success. (Fisheries)

## VII. Public Use Management Considerations

James A. Reed Memorial WA is between the cities of Lee's Summit and Greenwood, 25 minutes from downtown Kansas City. The greater Kansas City Metropolitan Area has an estimated population of 2 million people with easy access to the area from U.S. Highway 50. The area receives heavy public use, estimated at a quarter-million visitations annually. This heavy use can create challenges in balancing the needs of different user groups and in protecting the area's resources. James A. Reed Memorial WA is a popular destination for fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, dog training/field trials, and hiking/biking/horseback riding (with multiple trails providing miles of opportunity).

- 1) Challenges and Opportunities: Maintain fishing access. Many of the lakes are ADA-accessible and provide a diversity of fishing opportunities with easy access.
- 2) The size of the area, as well as the existence of healthy populations of game species, provide the public with several managed hunts and other hunting opportunities.
- 3) Maintain public recreational opportunities. The area receives high levels of competing public uses and is a popular place for hiking, biking, horseback riding, training sport-hunting dogs and holding dog field trials.
- 4) The 28-point archery range provides simulated practice for hunting situations and field target shooting opportunities.

- 5) The area is surrounded by sizable residential developments, which makes building relationships with neighboring landowners a challenge.
- 6) Maintain, promote and enhance educational and interpretive opportunities.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain public fishing access.

**Strategy 1:** Mow regularly around the lakes and dams to control woody vegetation and to maintain public access. (Fisheries, Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain a limited number of rental boats on Gopher Lake. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2:** Promote hunting and managed hunt opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Provide managed deer hunts to facilitate a healthy herd while providing hunting opportunities to the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Provide dove shooting field management and managed dove hunt opportunities for the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Provide waterfowl hunting opportunities. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 3:** Maintain and enhance trail systems at James A. Reed Memorial WA to provide quality hiking, biking, horseback riding and fishing access for the public.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain the Shawnee Trace Trail, multi-use trails and fishing access trails to provide quality access for the public. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Modify and update trails, as needed, to serve the pubic needs. Reduce trail maintenance, following the Department's guidelines for trail construction and improvement standards. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Strategy 3:** Give notice, on Department website and by signage, of trail or area closures that might affect trail and area access. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 4:** Maintain the area as a designated area for field trial opportunities, according to Department Regulations and Field Trial Policy.

**Strategy 1:** Take applications and issue special use permits for field trials as appropriate. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Communicate with field trial groups to modify field trial course in conjunction with management objectives to facilitate field trial events. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 5:** Manage and enhance the area archery shooting range to accommodate a variety of shooting opportunities in a way that promotes safe and responsible participation in hunting and shooting.

**Strategy 1:** Work with local Conservation Agents and law enforcement officials to ensure compliance of range regulations by area users. (Wildlife, Protection)

**Strategy 2:** Ensure the range is safe for public use and well maintained in accordance with the shooting range management guidelines. (Wildlife, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 3:** Modify and update the archery range, as needed, to serve the public's needs or reduce maintenance according to shooting range guidelines. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Management Objective 6:** Promote recreational, educational and interpretive opportunities on the area.

**Strategy 1:** Promote compatible uses of hunting, fishing, birding, hiking and nature photography. (Wildlife, Fisheries, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 2:** Inform the public of recreational opportunities (e.g., using brochures, Atlas database). (Wildlife, Fisheries)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain accurate area information and regulations. (Wildlife, Fisheries)

**Strategy 4:** Use Prairie Hollow Lake as the primary fishing area for the Discover Nature -- Fishing Program. (Fisheries, Outreach and Education)

**Strategy 5:** Develop other areas on the James A. Reed Memorial WA that can handle special Discover Nature -- Fishing programing, including Honker Pond and Bluestem Lake. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 6:** Use stockings of hybrid sunfish and catch-and-release fishing to maintain high catch rates during clinics. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 7:** Use the classroom in the Regional Office for Discover Nature -- Fishing classes that do not require water resources to complete. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 8:** Communicate to teachers, students, resource agencies, scout groups, and youth groups the uniqueness of the area as a possible destination for ecology classes, school programs (e.g., Discover Nature Schools) and workshops. Issue special use permits for groups requesting utilization. (Outreach and Education, Wildlife)

**Strategy 9:** Maintain interpretive signs to serve public education needs. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 10:** Continue to make the Kansas City Regional Office classroom available for education purposes and conservation group meetings. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 11:** Provide designated primitive camping locations for organized youth groups. Issue special use permits for groups requesting permission to camp. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 12:** Maintain designated areas and times for sport hunting dog training opportunities on the area. (Wildlife)

**Management Objective 7:** Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

**Strategy 1:** Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary trespass or any other issues affecting James A. Reed Memorial WA or private property. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Promote best management practices on neighboring landowner properties. (Private Land Services, Wildlife)

## **VIII. Administrative Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) The area receives high public use. Maintenance of the area and infrastructure demand a high degree of attention.
- 2) The area is surrounded by residential housing developments and any open land along the area boundary will continue to be developed. Continue to work with neighbors, homeowners, homeowner associations and city organizations to maintain good relationships.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain area infrastructure that is safe and inviting to the public.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with the Department guidelines. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Follow dam maintenance according to Department maintenance guidelines. (Wildlife, Design and Development)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain well-marked, accurate boundary lines.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain signs along boundary lines. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 2:** Obtain administrative guidance on resolving boundary issues. (Wildlife)

**Strategy 3:** Work with neighbors, homeowner associations; and city, county or state governments concerning boundary, water flow or other issues. (Wildlife, Fisheries, Private Lands)

**Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers or through donations. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered.

**MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE**

All strategies for this management plan are considered ongoing.

## APPENDICES

### **Area Background:**

The James A. Reed Memorial WA is located in Jackson County, south of U.S. Highway 50, near Lee's Summit. The wildlife area was established in 1952 when Mrs. Reed donated 731 acres of land to the Department, in memory of her husband, Senator James A. Reed. Additional tracts were purchased using federal monies and Department funds to bring the area to its present 3,084 acres.

Development of the area and lake construction began in 1957. Over 250 acres of water have been impounded to form 12 lakes, ranging in size from 1 to 42 acres. Most lakes contain largemouth bass, channel catfish, crappie, bluegill, green sunfish, redear sunfish and bullheads. Striped bass hybrids have been stocked in several of the lakes. The area also has numerous small ponds.

Woodlands, native grass plantings, shrub plantings and cropfields are managed to provide year-round food and cover for wildlife. The area also supports good numbers of deer and turkey.

A portion of this wildlife area was acquired, developed and is managed in part through the Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Act and the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. From the original 731 acre donation of Nell Reed in the memory of James A. Reed, the Department has increased the area, by purchasing from willing sellers, to 2,353 acres of additional land, making the area its current 3,084 acres. Before the Department's ownership, the wildlife area was heavily grazed and cropped. Once the Department started managing the lands, native grass and forbs plantings, shrub and tree plantings, lakes, ponds and wetlands were placed on the landscape to increase habitat for wildlife. Unfortunately, a host of invasive species also found their way to the area, such as fescue, sericea lespedeza, autumn olive and shrub honeysuckle.

**Current Land and Water Types:**

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Woodlands/Hedge Rows	1,059		34.3
Grasslands	685		22.2
Agricultural Fields	589		19.1
Old Fields	448		14.6
Open Water	252		8.2
Wetlands	28		0.9
Roads/Infrastructure	10		0.3
Forest	7		0.2
Glade	6		0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,084</b>		<b>100</b>
Stream Frontage		2.25	

**Public Input Summary:**

The draft James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Management Plan was available for a public comment period September 16– October 31, 2015. The Missouri Department of Conservation received comments from 11 respondents (Appendix B). The James A Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Planning Team carefully reviewed and considered these ideas as they finalized this document. A brief summary of public input themes, including how they were incorporated or why they were not, can be found below. Rather than respond to each individual comment, comments are grouped into general themes and are addressed collectively.

Prior to writing this draft area management plan, the Department conducted a public input process (the James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage) from Sept. 1 – Nov. 30, 2014. During this “idea gathering” stage, the Department received input from 68 respondents (see “James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage Public Input Summary” at <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/27589>). The area management planning team took comments into consideration as they drafted this 10-year management plan. Department responses to comments received during the idea gathering stage can be found in the report, *Missouri Department of Conservation Responses to Public Comments – James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area Idea Gathering Stage*. This report is available upon request by contacting Amy Buechler ([amy.buechler@mdc.mo.gov](mailto:amy.buechler@mdc.mo.gov)).

Department responses to themes and issues identified through the James A. Reed Wildlife Area public comment period

**Suggests releasing pheasants and/or quail on area for dog training and hunting.**

The majority of the ring-necked pheasant's range in Missouri lies north of the Missouri River and mostly in the two northern tiers of counties bordering Iowa. Pheasants do not do well in areas with little or no cropland, as 85 to 95 percent of their diet consists of cereal grain. The Department does not advocate the release of pen-reared game birds as a viable technique for re-establishing or enhancing populations. Repeated research across many states has demonstrated that survival of pen-raised birds is very poor, with fewer than 10 percent surviving more than a couple weeks. It seems that pen-raised birds do not possess the innate wildness necessary to avoid the pitfalls that wild birds face every day. Private shooting facilities offer opportunities to hunt and train dogs over pen-raised birds.

**Suggests adding brush piles as habitat for rabbit and quail.**

Area staff work on creating brush piles while doing habitat edge work, woodland work, and grassland renovations where applicable.

**Concern that local coyotes are not afraid of humans, especially April-June. Suggests cautioning area users at that time.**

Coyote pups are in dens and adults usually become more protective during that time period when close to dens. Coyotes perceive hunting dogs as a threat, and will defend the den from dogs. Caution should always be used when confronted with wildlife, whether it is raccoons, opossums or coyotes. Keeping pets leashed can help prevent confrontation.

**Concern about runoff from surrounding area into area lakes.**

The lakes on James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area were built in the late 1950s when land around the area was primarily farmland. Over time, the lakes silted in prompting lake renovations in the 1990s. With those renovations, silt basins were installed on all lakes to catch silt from run-off and to catch nutrients, such as fertilizer. These basins help, but the effects of high nutrient runoff from housing developments is still apparent in greater algae blooms and robust aquatic vegetation. Water quality of Reed Area lakes is monitored regularly. This area has been identified as a priority watershed within the state of Missouri.

**Suggests stocking more hybrid striped bass and walleye in area lakes. Suggests increased stocking of fish.**

Large predators, such as striped bass and walleye, have to be stocked at low rates so there is enough food for them to grow to a large size. Small numbers of them are stocked into small bodies of water to maintain harvest of a few high-quality fish. None of the lakes at the Reed Area

are of a sufficient size to stock and manage for walleye. Hybrid striped bass are not stocked on the area. There is a population of reproducing flathead catfish in Gopher Lake.

**Suggests allowing personally-owned canoes and kayaks on some lakes.**

Allowing personally-owned canoes and kayaks on some lakes is being evaluated in terms of enforcement, protecting waters from invasive species, fish population management, and infrastructure needs.

The area currently doesn't have boats ramps. Consequently, the increase in boat use may have an effect on existing infrastructure, banks, or may require new infrastructure to be built. Several nearby area lakes, such as Lone Jack Lake, Harrisonville North Lake, Amarugia Lake, and Prairie Lee Lake, allow private boats.

**Appreciates multi-use trails for horseback riding. Suggests adding a multi-use loop trail south of Browning Road.**

Area regulations currently allow horseback riding, biking, and hiking on 15 miles of multi-use trails that are signed and maintained. These trails are mowed once a month during the growing season and limbs are cleared, as needed, around the trails. Designated trails allow staff to monitor trail conditions for erosion and maintain stream crossings on a regular basis. The area's public roadsides are also open to horseback riding, biking, and hiking, adding another 7 miles of opportunity. Opportunities to expand infrastructure when and where applicable is continually evaluated.

**Concern that brush along area roads is causing line-of-sight issues for drivers and horseback riders.**

Brush and trees are removed along the roadways where line-of-sight issues are identified. Caution and control by horse riders is always warranted when other public use takes place in the same area. It is important to stay on designated trails so unexpected horse and vehicle encounters decrease. Additional signage to alert people of hikers, bikers, and horseback riders using the area is being evaluated. Ranson Road, Browning Road and their right-of-ways are maintained by Jackson County. There is a trail on the southwest side of the cemetery to alleviate this issue at the Ranson Road and Browning Road intersection. Horseback riders are encouraged to use trail entrances, such as the one across from the horse stables along Ranson Road next to the old area entrance.

**Suggests allowing low-speed all-terrain vehicles on area trails.**

ATVs, UTVs and other vehicles are not allowed on trails at James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area. Trail damage, erosion, wildlife harassment, issues with other trail users, and noise pollution are a few of the reasons for this regulation.

**Appreciates managed hunts and winter trout. Appreciates area for dog training.**  
**Appreciates James. A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area. Supports area management plan.**  
Thank you.

**References:**

Nigh, T. A., & Schroeder, W. A. (2002). *Atlas of Missouri ecoregions*. Jefferson City, Missouri: Missouri Department of Conservation.

**Maps:**

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map with Easements

Figure 3: Topographic Map

Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map

**Additional Appendices:**

Appendix A. James A Reed Wildlife Area Management Plan Public Comments

**Figure 1: Area Map**

## JAMES A. REED MEMORIAL WILDLIFE AREA

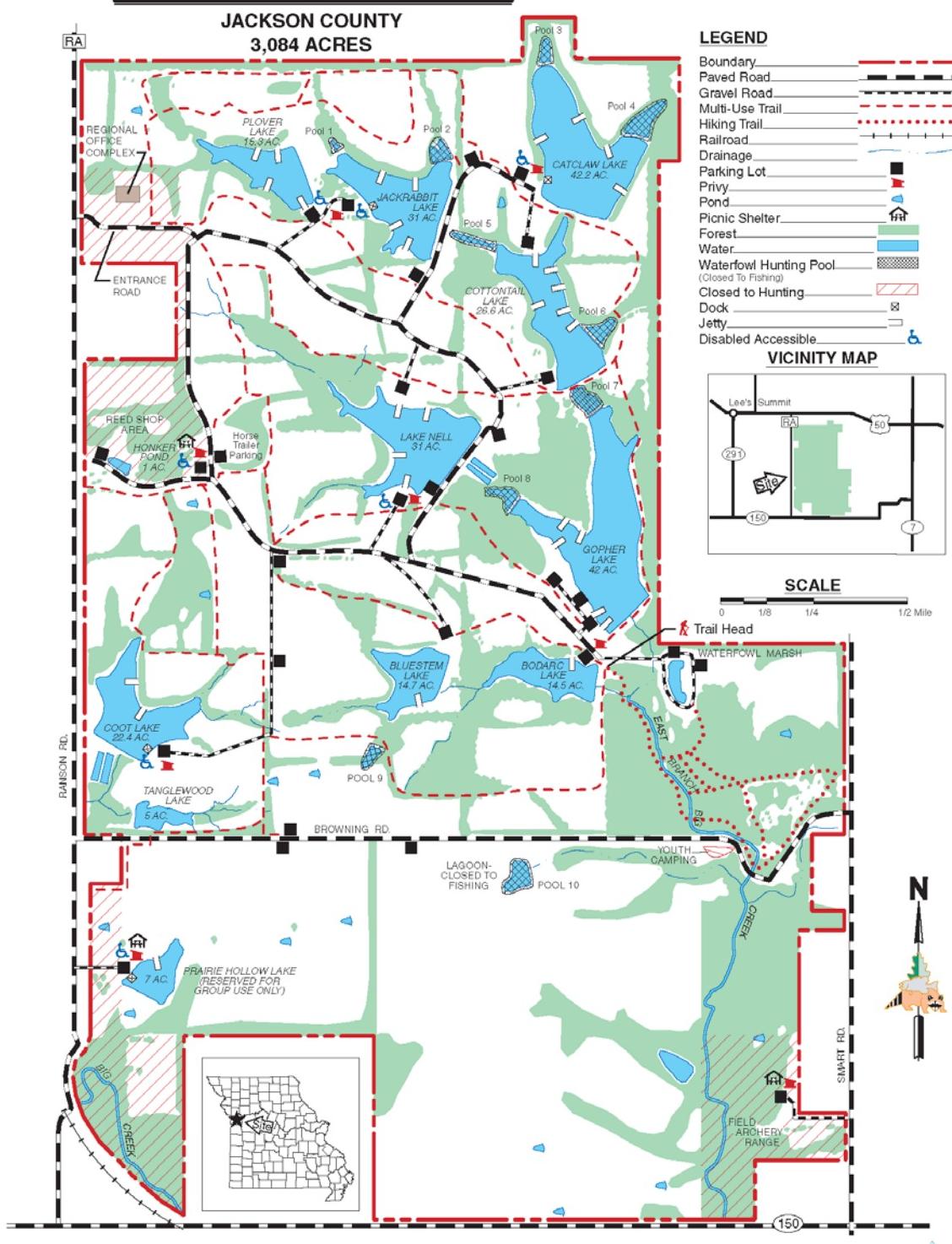


Figure 2: Aerial Map with Easements

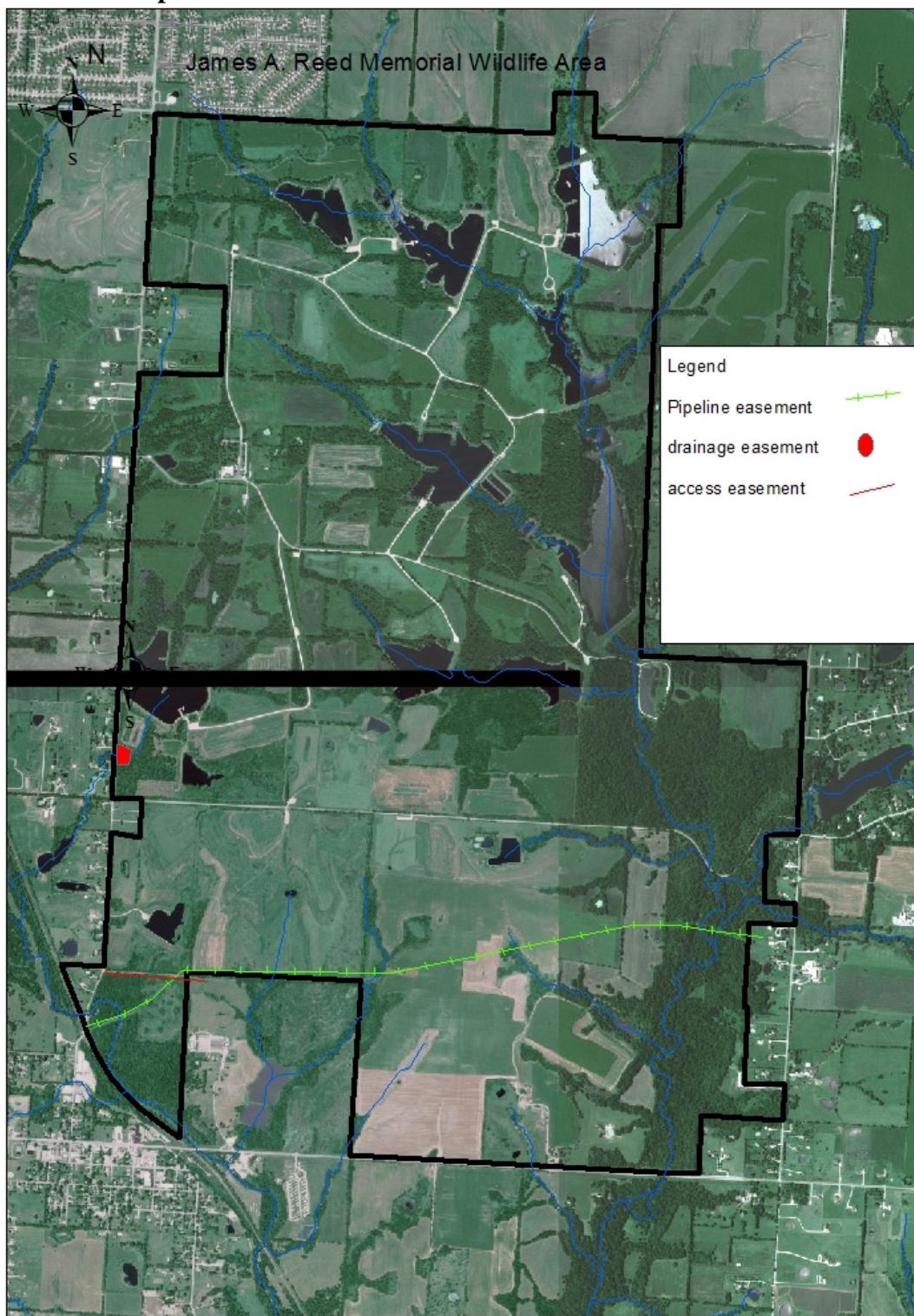
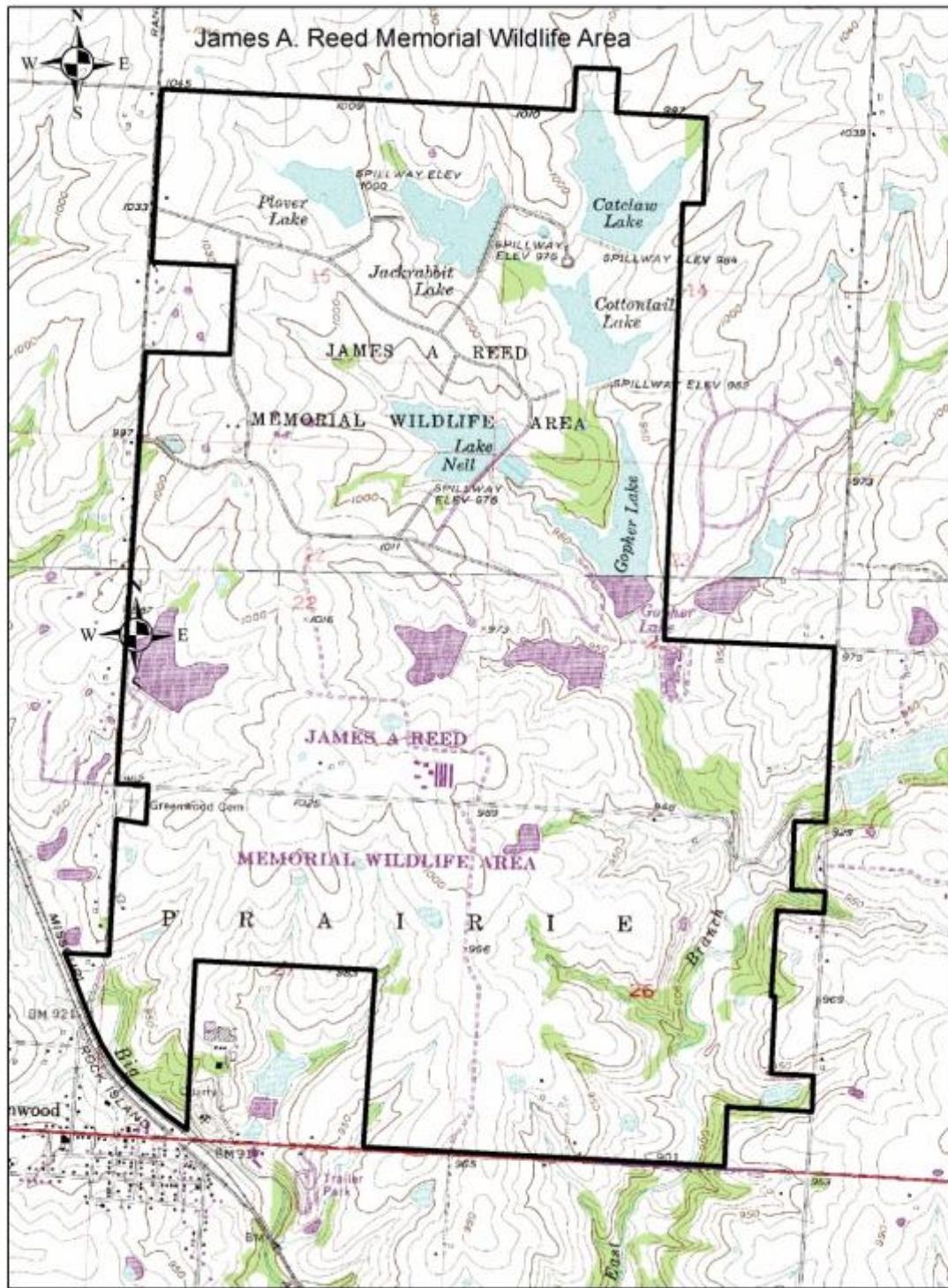
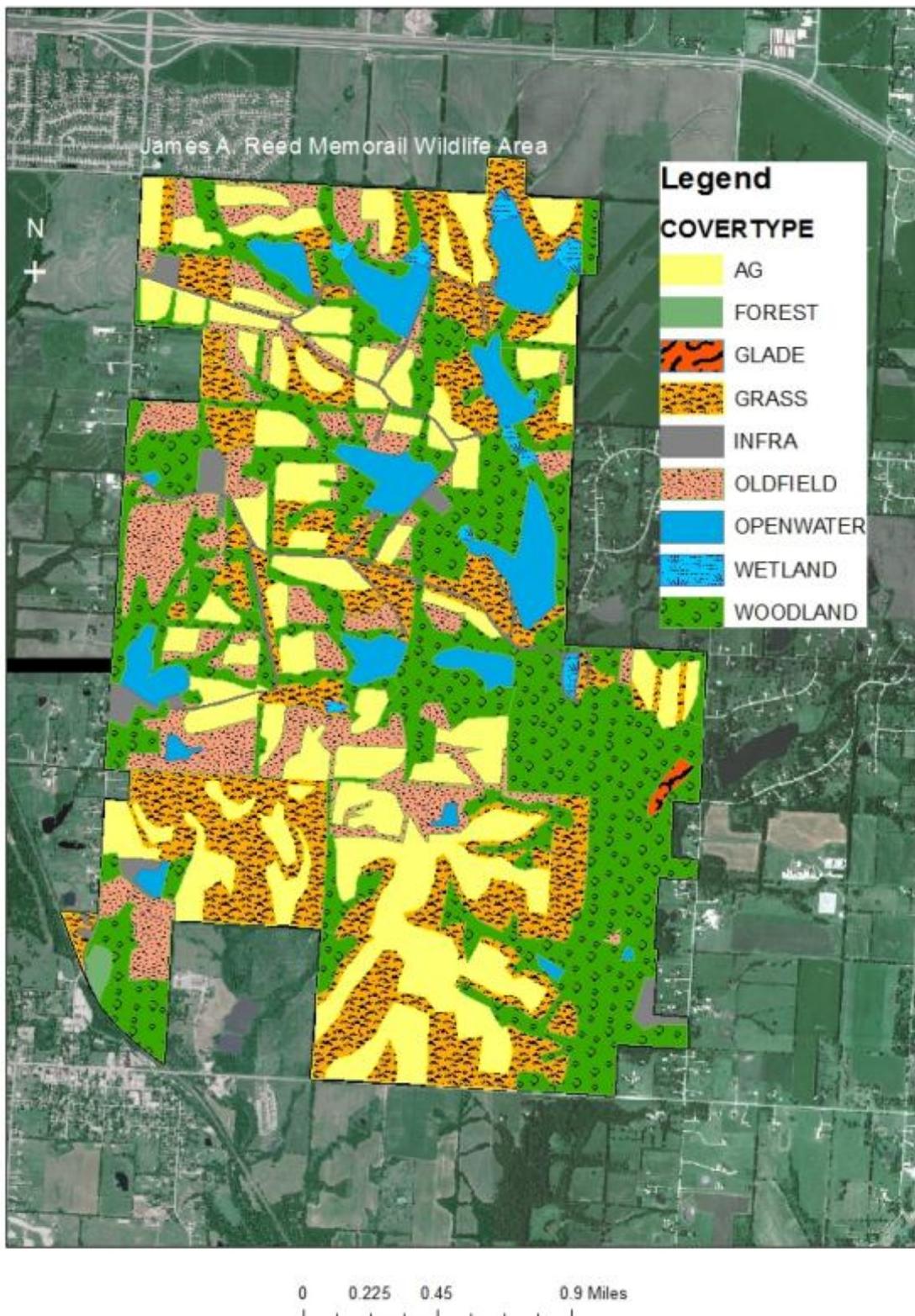


Figure 3: Topographic Map



**Figure 4: Current Vegetation Map**

## Appendix A. James A Reed Wildlife Area Management Plan Public Comments

Received during public comment period (September 16 – October 31, 2015):

I believe in your overall 10 year plan. This system for usage works for the general public so there need to be NO changes there.

I really enjoy James A Reed when I use the area.

Release pheasants during summer months. Birds could be used by dog trainers. Allow ALL pheasants to be harvested during the regular firearms season or a managed hunt.

Quail would be the second bird of choice for a similar release pattern.

Stock more wipers and/or walleye (greater density / greater frequency). There should be minimal effect on the overall balance of fish populations because of the catch rate in such a heavily fished area. At JAR I have never seen a hybrid or talked with anyone who has seen one at the area.

Establish more brush piles. I know that MDC in general seems to have developed a mind set against brush piles and will mention the use of the piles by predator species but historically brush piles were common in the very best of the rabbit and quail hunting areas in the Lee's Summit region. They are a nuisance if you are trying to use prescribed burns but I think very feasible at JAR, especially as your management plan mentions problems with current tree rows.

Keep up the excellent work. I started fishing the area the first year it was opened; I think we were there at first light on opening day. Tag was either \$.50 or \$1 (stamped with "MINOR" for us kids). Limit was 4 bass a day and we caught plenty of them that summer, along with numerous bullfrogs, on our Hula Poppers, Jitterbugs, etc. Enjoyed Dove hunting there in the early '60's. We hunted rabbits at JAR as well, but not too often as we had abundant private property to hunt locally and there were plenty of rabbits everywhere back then. I now come up and fish for trout a few times each season and hunt for doves there occasionally.

Other than above, pretty much keep on doing the excellent you have been doing.

Thanks for the work at JAR and on all of the public land available in Mo.

The dog training area at James reed is second to none as far as training my beagle pack for hunting and Multiple registry Beagle field trialing. 2015 has noted a marked increase in the Coyote population. This follows as a natural cycle with predator population increasing behind an

increase in game species namely the rabbit population increase that has been noted over the past 3 years.2012 -2015. The concern for myself is the lack of fear of humans that appears to be the case regarding mostly Mother Coyotes protecting their young. I personally have had several encounters over the past few years. In one case a young female beagle of mine was bitten on her back. a fang nearly missing her spine in 2014. these encounters happen mostly in the April-June months as young coyote pups are learning how to hunt with mother. Other local Hounds men have shared with me several noted encounters as well. Most often around the south western (Coot Lake) area. A caution given to park users may be prudent at this time to raise awareness to possible future encounters with joggers, hikers, those fishing especially with small children and other park users.

We enjoy fishing at the lakes but we never catch anything from the bank. Perhaps the lakes could be stocked better.

I would like to see private kayak, and canoe allowed on at least some of the lakes!

Consider opening some of the longer off road trails for LOW SPEED ATV/UTV sight seeing use (require a MDC tag for identification and control purposes).

I appreciate your decision to continue with the field trial areas. It has become increasingly difficult to find land to simply do any dog training and field work with dogs that participate in hunting and conservation. Without these pivotal areas hunters do not have opportunity to train dogs to develop the natural ability the dog possess to contribute in the hunting experience.

I am spoiled with JARMWA. There is a hiking trail that the horses and bikers can't muddy up. There is an undeveloped south area that I can bushwhack (follow deer trails). The rest I can deal with. There are adequate paved roads that I ride my mountain bike on as I turn back to home from Greenwood. I see skunks and turkeys, owls, deer and an assortment of native grasses thriving. It is a great escape.

20 years ago I witnessed a club releasing caged wild ducks to be shot in sport. I hope that this is no longer allowed.

As the area to the north is developed, can they be encouraged to divert their runoff from the JAR pond-feeds? It might also be stressed that the fertilizer in the crop areas be applied to minimize leaching. There might be vegetative borders or wetlands designed to capture most of this before it gets into the lakes.

Other than that, the less development, the better. Disney World has already been built and there are plenty of public parks. JAR should have a little of the natural wild on display, i.e., parts of the natural world that are strangled out in urban areas. I'm sure that ecosystems is a theme in the new visitors center.

Thanks!

I like the managed hunts a lot, and the winter trout is wonderful. I do wish it was easier to hunt waterfowl on the area with some pit blinds installed but understand the reluctance. Please keep up the good work.

I both ride and drive horses and ponies in the area. I would like to see some access on the south end of the park that would allow both these activities. The new entrance is very far from my house and Ranson Rd is very narrow and dangerous. The JAR roadway has been allowed to grow over in trash trees and brush which has impeded riding. It would be nice to have that cleaned up. The northeast corner of Ranson and Browning Rd is extremely dangerous for both car drivers and horse drivers because of the weeds allowed to overgrow the sight lines for turning. Immediate attention to this is needed. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Show Me Missouri Back Country Horsemen commends MDC for the excellent, extensive multi-use trail network on James A. Reed Memorial WLA. This affords countless outdoor recreation and nature experience opportunities to the citizens of Missouri and the Greater Kansas City Area. We provided input during the Idea Gathering Phase, and we want to repeat our suggestion that a large, multi-use trail loop for hiking, biking and horseback riding would make an excellent improvement on the tract south of Browning Road. A number of other public comments made the same suggestion, indicating public support for this improvement. Utilizing existing access roads and field borders and making a few carefully located crossings of watercourses would create a nice, long loop with a minimum of installation effort. SMMBCH would offer, subject to available resources, to assist to layout and construct the new trail loop. In accordance with the Department's response in the Public Input Summary, SMMBCH will cooperate with Wildlife Division and the Area Manager to organize a group of local trail user volunteers to assist with trail maintenance and improvement through participation in the adopt-a-trail program. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.